

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN, U.S., PO
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: AZOREAN LEADER'S STATEMENTS ON LAJES

1. THE AZORES SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ITS "STRATEGIC LOCATION"
IN TERMS OF THE LAJES BASE NEGOTIATIONS, ACCORDING TO STATEMENTS
ATTRIBUTED TO AZOREAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT ALVARO
MONJARDINO. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF THE ARTICLE, PUBLISHED ON PAGE 2
OF AUG. 22 "DIARIO DE NOTICIAS" NEWSPAPER UNDER HEADLINE
"ACCORDING TO ALVARO MONJARDINO: AZORES SHOULD MAKE THE MOST
OF ITS STRATEGIC SITUATION".

2. (BEGIN TEXT)
THE NECESSITY OF THE AZORES ARCHIPELAGO MAKING THE MOST OF ITS
STRATEGIC SITUATION WAS BROUGHT OUT IN AN INTERVIEW TO AN
AMERICAN NEWSPAPER BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY,
DR. ALVARO MONJARDINO.
HIS STATEMENTS, PUBLISHED BY A FALL RIVER JOURNAL, WERE PARTIALLY
REVEALED IN LISBON FROM THE "DIARIO DA MADEIRA" WHICH PRINTED
THEM LAST SATURDAY.
TO ALVARO MONJARDINO, THE AGREEMENT RECENTLY CONCLUDED WITH
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FRANCE ABOUT THAT COUNTRY'S BASE ON FLORES ISLAND WAS "ABSOLUTELY
ADVANTAGEOUS FOR THE REGION." THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH
TO THE NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING THE LAJES BASE, HE SAID, ALREADY
HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY.
ALVARO MONJARDINO DID NOT SPECIFY FIGURES ABOUT THE FINANCIAL
ADVANTAGES WHICH THE AZORES COULD RECEIVE FROM THESE INTERNATIONAL
AGREEMENTS. HE RESPONDED TO ONE QUESTION ALONG THIS LINE BY

LIMITING HIS RESPONSE TO "THE REGION NEEDS EMPLOYMENT AND PROJECTS MORE THAN IT NEEDS MONEY."

DURING THE SAME INTERVIEW THE AZOREAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT NOTED THE EXISTENCE THERE OF "A CERTAIN CAUTION ABOUT THE TERREIRO DO PACO ADMINISTRATION," WHICH HAS, AS HE PUT IT, A "CENTRALIST APPROACH WHICH IS TYPICAL OF THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT."

THE INTERVIEWEE ALSO STATED SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION'S STATUTE OF AUTONOMY, CONCLUDING THAT "SINCE THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE, WE IN THE REGION BELIEVE IT IS WORTH EXPERIMENTING WITH IT."

HE STATED, "TODAY, ON THE OTHER HAND, IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD THERE ARE INSULAR REGIONS WHICH ARE TENDING TO BECOME AUTONOMOUS BUT NOT INDEPENDENT.. THIS IS AN ERA OF INTERDEPENDENCE AND NOT INDEPENDENCE." AND HE CONCLUDED:

"IT IS NATURAL THAT WE ARE ON THE ROAD TO AUTONOMY, BUT THIS AUTONOMY WE HAVE CAME FROM A WORKING GROUP AND WAS IMPOSED ON THE REGION AFTER A COUNCIL OF MINISTER'S NIGHT-TIME MEETING -- THAT'S ALL. IF I WERE ASKED WHETHER THE STATE WAS DEMOCRATICALLY CONCEIVED, I WOULD SAY NO. LET US SEE WHAT THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY DOES AND IF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DOES NOT COMPLICATE MATTERS." (END TEXT)
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